<u>In the Claims</u>

1. (Currently amended) A method of ~~simplifying the technical infrastructure deployed~~ ~~in a system for~~ processing questions sent from a mobile telephone over a wireless ~~bearer~~ <u>network controlled by a wireless network operator</u>, comprising the following steps:

(a)   receiving a question sent from the mobile telephone <u>over the wireless network</u>;

(b)   handling that question by sending it out for review by one or more human researchers to compose an answer;

(c)   sending the answer ~~in plain text~~ <u>back</u> to the mobile telephone <u>as a text message</u>; wherein the question is not restricted to any category of question types, is expressed in natural language and is sent using a premium rate text service <u>offered by the wireless network operator</u>.

2. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the step of handling includes the step of handling the question at a first computer that (i) searches a database of previously generated answers for answers that match the question; (ii) automatically generates a list of potential answers to the question from the database; and (iii) automatically sends the unanswered question, together with the list of possible answers, out for review by at least one of the human researchers, who then selects one of the answers in the list or uses the list of possible answers together with information from the on-line information resources to compose an answer.

3. (original)   The method of Claim 2 in which the researcher investigates and writes an answer using the on-line information resources if none of the answers in the automatically generated list of possible answers is suitable.

4. (original)   The method of Claim 2 in which the first computer automatically determines the correct answer and automatically sends the answer as a message to the mobile telephone.

5. (original)   The method of Claim 2 in which the question is sent from a mobile telephone by the user calling a premium voice service and having the question recorded and then sent to the first computer.

6. (original)   The method of Claim 5 in which the question is first translated into text by the researcher before being submitted to the first computer for processing.

7. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the question includes an image and the image is then understood, matched, and translated.

8. (original)   The method of Claim 2 in which a web based interface is used by the or each researcher and that interface displays the question and the list of possible answers selected by the first computer.

9. (original)   The method of Claim 8 in which the web based interface also displays a countdown timer.

10. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the researcher summarises the answer succinctly to fit into a maximum of 160 characters.

11. (original)   The method of Claim 2 in which each answer is stored in the database of previously generated answers at the first computer.

12. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which a two tier system of researchers is used, with frontline researchers attempting to answer all questions initially and passing hard questions to senior researchers.

13. (original)   The method of Claim 12 in which frontline researchers have a maximum predefined time to answer each question and can reject the question earlier if they know they cannot answer it.

14. (original)   The method of Claim 13 in which, if a frontline researcher fails to answer the question, it goes to another frontline researcher and, after a predefined number of unsuccessful attempts by frontline researchers to answer the question, the question goes on a "Hard Question" list which senior researchers work from.

15. (original) The method of Claim 1 in which all researchers have access to an Instant Messaging system that allows them to chat to each other over the internet if they need help answering a question.

16. (original) The method of Claim 2 in which the first computer deploys algorithms for one or more of: spell checking of answers; content level checking of answers.

17. (original) The method of Claim 2 in which the first computer monitors the performance of the answer generating method and provides statistics on one or more of: question rate, rate of answering, time taken to answer by each researcher, hours logged by each researcher.

18. (original) The method of Claim 1 in which the researcher is automatically provided with a list of recent (or all) previous questions and associated answers sent from a given user when answering a new question from that user.

19. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the researcher is automatically provided with an indication of the current location of the user.

20. (original) The method of Claim 1 in which the question and answer are sent using SMS.

21. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the question and answer are sent using EMS or MMS.

22. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the question and answer are sent using GPRS, CDMA, or W-CDMA data connections.

23. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which the premium rate service is either mobile originating (MO) or mobile terminating (MT).

24. (original)   The method of Claim 1 in which a different question is sent as a premium rate voice message.

24. (original)   An answer message sent as the final step in the method of processing questions as defined in Claim 1.

25. (original)   A mobile telephone when displaying an answer message as defined in Claim 24.

26. (new)   A system adapted to process questions sent from a mobile telephone, in which the mobile telephone sends, to a mobile network interface hardware, a question as a text message using a premium rate text service offered by a mobile network operator using a billing information sub-system that is part of the mobile network operator's physical

infrastructure, the question being expressed in natural language but not being restricted to any

category of question types, the system being further adapted to send the question out for

review by one or more human researchers and then send an answer as a text message back to

the mobile telephone.

27. (new)   The system of Claim 26 further including a first computer that (i)

searches a database of previously generated answers for answers that match the question; (ii)

automatically generates a list of potential answers to the question from the database; and (iii)

automatically sends the unanswered question, together with the list of possible answers, out

for review by at least one of the human researchers, who then selects one of the answers in

the list or uses the list of possible answers together with information from the on-line

information resources to compose an answer.

28. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the researcher investigates and writes

an answer using the on-line information resources if none of the answers in the automatically

generated list of possible answers is suitable.

29. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the first computer automatically

determines the correct answer and automatically sends the answer as a message to the mobile

telephone.

30. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the question is sent from a mobile telephone by the user calling a premium voice service and having the question recorded and then sent to the first computer.

31. (new)   The system of Claim 30 in which the question is first translated into text by the researcher before being submitted to the first computer for processing.

32. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the question includes an image and the image is then understood, matched, and translated.

33. (new)   The system of Claim 27 in which a web based interface is used by the or each researcher and that interface displays the question and the list of possible answers selected by the first computer.

34. (new)   The system of Claim 33 in which the web based interface also displays a countdown timer.

35. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the researcher summarises the answer succinctly to fit into a maximum of 160 characters.

36.(new)   The system of Claim 27 in which each answer is stored in the database of previously generated answers at the first computer.

37. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which a two tier system of researchers is used, with frontline researchers attempting to answer all questions initially and passing hard questions to senior researchers.

38. (new)   The system of Claim 37 in which frontline researchers have a maximum predefined time to answer each question and can reject the question earlier if they know they cannot answer it.

39. (new)   The system of Claim 38 in which, if a frontline researcher fails to answer the question, it goes to another frontline researcher and, after a predefined number of unsuccessful attempts by frontline researchers to answer the question, the question goes on a "Hard Question" list which senior researchers work from.

40. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which all researchers have access to an Instant Messaging system that allows them to chat to each other over the internet if they need help answering a question.

41. (new)   The system of Claim 27 in which the first computer deploys algorithms for one or more of: spell checking of answers; content level checking of answers.

42 (new).   The system of Claim 27 in which the first computer monitors the performance of the answer generating method and provides statistics on one or more of: question rate, rate of answering, time taken to answer by each researcher, hours logged by each researcher.

43. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the researcher is automatically provided with a list of recent (or all) previous questions and associated answers sent from a given user when answering a new question from that user.

44. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the researcher is automatically provided with an indication of the current location of the user.

45. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the question and answer are sent using SMS.

46.(new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the question and answer are sent using EMS or MMS.

47. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the question and answer are sent using GPRS, CDMA, or W-CDMA data connections.

48. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which the premium rate service is either

mobile originating (MO) or mobile terminating (MT).

49. (new)   The system of Claim 26 in which a different question is sent as a

premium rate voice message.

50. (new)   A system adapted to process questions sent from a mobile telephone, in

which the mobile telephone sends, to a mobile network interface hardware, a question as a

text message using a premium rate text service offered by a mobile network operator using a

billing information sub-system that is part of the mobile network operator's physical

infrastructure, the question being expressed in natural language but not being restricted to any

category of question types; the system comprising:

    (a)   a server that stores previously generated answers in a database;

    (b)   a first computer that receives the text message from the mobile network

interface and (i) searches the server for previously generated answers for answers that match

the question; (ii) automatically generates a list of potential answers to the question from the

database; and (iii) automatically sends out the unanswered question, together with the list of

possible answers;

    (c)   a web server to receive the unanswered question and list of possible answers,

sent from the first computer;

    (d)   one or more researcher's computers, each connected to the web server and the

World Wide Web, that receive the unanswered question and list of possible answers sent

from the first computer, the or each researcher's computer then displaying the unanswered

question and list of possible answers to enable a human researcher to either select one of the

answers in the list or use the list of possible answers together with information from on-line

information resources in the World Wide Web, to compose an answer;

      (e)   a connection from the or each researcher's computer back to the mobile

network interface hardware, to enable the answer to be sent as a text message back to the

mobile telephone that originated the question.